* Surgery is usually done awake but sedation is used if animal is resistant
* The animal is usually restrained in lateral recumbency on a tilt table or casted with ropes to expose teat and udders. The up leg is abducted and tied out of the way for surgery.
* To perform a ring block, local anesthetic is injected proximal to the intended surgery site circumferentially around the teat, intercepting nerves that run longitudinally down the teat. General anesthesia may be useful for long procedures such as mastectomy
* Incisions within the teat should be oriented vertically. Due to the neurovascular structures running longitudinally in the teat, vertical (longitudinal) incisions tend to disrupt these neurovascular structures less and increases prognosis and recovery time.
* Circumferential incisions and lacerations tend to cause avascularity and denervation to the teat distal to the incision. Thelotomy incisions to approach lesions within the teat cistern should be made on the teat side opposite of the lesion. This allows for better visualization of the lesion
* When suturing full thickness teat defects, a 3-layer closure should be employed. The mucosa should be sutured as the first layer. This creates a seal and does not allow milk to escape through the other layers of the teat.
* Very fine (4-0/2-0) monofilament, absorbable, suture is recommended. The submucosa is the holding layer and special care should be taken to grab substantial bites of submucosa. Fine absorbable suture is also used for the submucosa layer. The skin is sutured with non-absorbable or absorbable suture.
* Rough handling of the teat in surgery can cause excessive trauma, inflammation, and fibrosis. Excessive scar F=tissue in this location can create a “hard milker.”
* Following surgery, the teat should be allowed to heal in a atraumatic environment. Hand milking is very disruptive to the teat while machine milking is less disruptive. The quarter can also be drained passively by inserting a teat cannula into the teat. Sterile technique should be followed when inserting teat cannulas.